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# A MAHODAYA ART SOUVENIR

OF

"THEERTHA" and "VARNA"

FROM THE

IMMORTAL BHOJA'S ROYAL HOUSE

of the 11th Century

THE KUPPUSWAMY SASTRI  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE,  
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(MAHODAYA DAY)

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IDOL OF SARASWATHI ENSHRINED IN BHOJA'S  
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF DHARA  
(XIII CENTURY A. D.)

## PREFACE

On the morning of the 25th January of this year, when I was taking leave of my Guru His Holiness The Jagatguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamikal of the Kauchi Kamakoti Peetam, on the sands of the river Pinakini or South Pennar in South Arcot District (South India), I got the *Adesh* from His Holiness to publish a small pamphlet as a Souvenir on 9-2-1948, the First Mahodaya Day after India won her Swaraj. I have tried to incorporate in this pamphlet certain ideas and suggestions of His Holiness. It ends with the prayer to God and Nation that the development and maintenance of our ancient culture in its unalloyed form should be our goal. This would be possible only in the country described as :

शस्त्रेण रक्षिते देशे शास्त्राभ्यासः प्रवर्तते ।

-‡ (It is only) in the country (well) protected by Sastra (Military power) (from aggression) (that) development in Shastra (Arts and culture) proceeds (at a rapid pace). ‡ This is quite consistent with the principles of Ahimsa as taught in Vedic literature.

Mahodaya is an event of rare occurrence. When the New Moon day in the months of Pousha and Magha falls on a Sunday, combined with Vyathi Pada and Sravana, and the conjunction is

complete, and occurs in the forenoon, the occasion is termed Ardhodaya which is very very rare indeed, and is considered equivalent in sacredness to several Solar eclipses (कोटिसूर्यग्रहैस्समः). If such a conjunction is not complete, or in other words if any one of the conditions is very *slightly* defective, then the occasion is called a Mahodaya. This is also of rare occurrence. Millions of Hindus go on this day to some holy waters—may be a river, or a confluence of one river with another, or a Saras or Ocean or some “Theertha”-for a bath. On this occasion it is also usual to refer to and think (smarana) of sacred “Theerthas” in the country. On this day I felt inclined to think of, amongst others the one for which King Bhoja was responsible, the Bhojpur Lake, formed in the 11th Century. I therefore desire to draw attention to this old “Theertha”.

The extensive Bhojpur lake and the auxiliary Reservoir formed in Northern India by king Bhoja in the 11th Century had on their shores several temples built by Bhoja. The most famous of Bhoja's temples was the one built at Dhara, wherein was located the great University College founded by Bhoja. In this temple was enshrined the figure of Saraswathi, a bust copy of which is in the frontispiece. The Devi in Her Serene pose was witnessing, four centuries later, the demolishing (by Shah Hussain, a Mandu Sultan) of the Lake dam that harnessed the run-off of the Betwa River

waters, and it looked as if Her tears flowed through the gap in the dam for three long years before the reservoir got empty. I felt that through the *Adesh* of His Holiness, I had received the Devi's command to put forth an appeal on the first Mahodaya day after India got her Independence in 1947, to restore India to its prestine glory.

Professor W. E. Clark of the University of Chicago mentions in his Presidential address,\* April 20, to the American Oriental Society at Philadalphia :

“Not all the energy of India has been directed towards a purely spiritual goal..... We must emphasise the economic goal and the development of industry, which for many centuries made India one of the greatest industrial and trading countries in the world.

We now know that the Indians were one of the greatest navigating and colonising people of antiquity. From the first century of the Christian era, and probably from three or four centuries before that time, the so-called Indian ocean was in a very literal sense, the Indian Ocean.

There were Indian colonies, Indian dynasties of Kings, Indian architecture, Art,

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\* “Some misunderstanding about India”



Indian religion and Indian codes of law and Government all over the Far East."

"Theerthas" and "Varnas" received in the ancient States special and adequate protection from the kings, and the country's development in *all* directions was wonderful, having no disturbance, internal or external, the Sastra or Military strength in each State being maintained efficiently.

The restoration of the two monuments of king Bhoja on "Theertha" and "Varna" (his Bhojpur Lake, and his University College at Dhara) is the theme of my humble prayers on this Mahodaya Day.

This Souvenir contains a print of the Sarpa Banda (Serpentine) Inscription of the 11th Century, which is Sanskrit Grammar in a nut shell. These inscriptions appear to have been made during the reign of Bhoja's immediate successors in the 11th and 12th centuries, but the grammatical tables themselves may be older. They are of educational interest and must have been designed by some ingenious teacher and permanently engraved on the pillars as charts in schools. Possibly they represent lessons prescribed for certain course in the Saraswathi temple. These inscriptions were found by a "Fortunate Chance" on two stone pillars in a Mosque near the tomb of Moulana Kamaludin at Dhar that was built with the materials and at the site of Bhoja's temple of Saraswathi

(or his University College). This mosque is still popularly called Bhoja Raja Ki Nisal, or Raja Bhoja's College (See photo on pages 12 & 13).

Let me just briefly analyse why such ancient and public utility works of value of "Theertha" and "Varna" (like the Bhoja's lake and College) came to be destroyed. Is it not the fault of the State? Yes, it is. The Vedic cult and its principles were not *closely* followed from B. C. days and the State or States began to gradually wane in their strength (physical and moral). The coming in of Buddha was the catastrophe, and our Vedic ideas of Ahimsa got influenced or changed by Buddhist preachings. The Buddhistic prescription and its "Run away" ideal were sought to be universally administered to every individual whatever may be his calling, on the justification of Ahimsa. We should contrast the Buddhist ideal of "Run away" and the Hindu ideal of "Live it well". The principle of Ahimsa should not be misapplied. According to Hindu or Vedic principles, the ideal of running away and renunciation and purely spiritualistic life was for, and meant only for, the few who take to the Sanyasa Ashrama, cutting themselves off from Society at large. The general rule is the normal life of a householder. There is hardly any authority which does not mention that the stage of the householder, the Grihasthasrama, is the best. Sri Harsa says in his Naisadha that like India among countries,

Garhasthya is best among Asramas. All the Smrtis praise the Grihasthasrama. To live here discharging one's duties righteously, in the reverent spirit of co-operating in God's work, offering Him each work as if it were the flower of one's worship "स्वकर्मणा तमभ्यर्च्य" is the great Karmayoga taught by the Gita. The "Isavasyopanishad" says

कुर्वन्नेवेह कर्माणि जिजीविषेच्छतं समाः ।

"Continuing to do, one should wish to live for a hundred years". Krsna says in the eleventh Skandha of the "Bhagavata":

Remaining in this world, doing his duty, sinless and pure, one attains pure knowledge and devotion to Me.

अस्मिन् लोके वर्तमानः स्वधर्मस्थोऽनघः शुचिः ।

ज्ञानं विशुद्धमाप्नोति मद्भक्तिं वा यदृच्छया ॥

Prof. W. E. Clark of the University of Chicago writes—"Nor did the Brahmanic scheme of life exclude life here and enjoyment of Artha and Kama. The ideal was not the *Sanyasin*, but the *Grihastha*. It was insisted that one should marry, live and work and do his social duties."

Those who had purely spiritual yearnings and who are Adhikaris or fitted for the same were given full scope to walk the path of *Sanyasa*. The *Sanyasa* ideal in Hinduism is one separate Ashrama.

Those who take to it can have and follow the strictest Ahimsa (or Buddhistic) ideals, as the object is their own personal salvation. The Vedic idea of Ahimsa is so thorough that the Hindu Sanyasis should not even separate a leaf from a plant or tree. The Sanyasis need no external help or support, or even protection from danger or interference. They are separate units cut off from the public or Society, and nothing is lost by the Community, if they die or even get killed. They may only lose their body but they can look after their salvation. They therefore need no protection from the State for their personal good or for the upkeep of their nobler and finer instincts.

What about the other members in Society? If they all follow blindly the Ahimsa cult of Buddhism without their being fitted (Adhikaris) for the same, the result will be a catastrophe: there will be no section in Society capable of giving them physical protection from external foes or foreign aggressors who do not have the same cult but who have chosen to develop brute force, and the result will be the society may get annihilated or brought under thralldom. Unlike the Sanyasis, they cannot face, and are unfit to face, such trouble and the result will be misery for themselves and their progeny.

With the Hindu or Vedic cult and its idea about Ahimsa, the position is different and it will

result in perfection if followed. Separate duties are detailed for different citizens. The whole society is happy. Kautilya and Vatsyayana insist on Artha and Kama being enjoyed without the violation of Dharma. Salvation is not denied to the Grihastha who might have Tatvajnana and other good qualities.

देवार्चनरतः तत्त्वज्ञाननिष्ठोऽतिथिप्रियः ।

श्राद्धं कृत्वा ददद् द्रव्यं गृहस्थोऽपि हि मुच्यते ।

Even the bliss of Brahman-realisation is to be enjoyed not in a world other than this.

अत्र ब्रह्म समश्नुते ।

Is this not ideal? Such a position *was* actually reached in our country before Buddha came in and introduced his ideas of Ahimsa.

Are Buddha's ideas practical? Did his cult take root? Did it come to stay? Is it practised as intended, or only in name? At the time the move started, the country was flourishing and healthy. The injection had good effect and began to spread and there were no factors to put its practical utility to test. King Asoka started his Ahimsa faith after a full experience of Himsa (his Kalinga war and the death of thousands of warriors therein). Being the Ruler, he was able to *mechanically* spread the Buddhist religion, and many people took to it. Even in countries where

the Buddhist religion spread in those palmy days, did it stay or come to stay *in essence*? Most of the religionists have been, and are non-vegetarian in Burma, Java, China and Japan—which is opposed to the fundamental principle of Ahimsa. Buddhist cult of Ahimsa as such is therefore non-existent *in essence*, being unpractical for the safety and continuance of a Society. In India it had one bad effect, and that was it seriously affected Hindu or Vedic ideals being closely followed, and the glorious position we had reached in pre-Buddha days began to deteriorate slowly at first and rapidly thereafter.

At this period, the development of the Semitic culture on the west and their one-sided advancement which ignored the nobler and finer human instincts, began to muster strength and they were able to get **S**way, though gradual, over our country—which at that time began to swerve from the true Vedic path, (due to Buddhist influence), and did not bestow adequate attention to keep the subjects happy and progressive without fear. Our country had to sail and is still in a stormy sea between Scylla and Charybdis, coming under the influence on one side, of one race or religion which ignores all nobler instincts and believes only in brute force (Himsa), aggression and self aggrandisement, and on the other side, of one religion started in our country which decries Himsa of any sort, and

which seriously affected our following the old Hindu or Vedic ideals which correctly differentiate Himsa from Ahimsa, and lend to the happiness of the people at large and their general salvation. Instances are not wanting to show that pure Ahimsa of Buddha lands one in Himsa, being impractical, and pure Himsa after an experiment lands one in Ahimsa, and the cycle of Maya moves on for ever. A correct appreciation and blending of the two ideas is what is prescribed in Hindu or Vedic culture and this has been given a practical test in pre-Buddha days and found wonderfully successful, leading to general happiness and salvation. Sri Krishna's Sermon to Arjuna at a critical hour clearly establishes how a correct combination is necessary and this will be the Vedic law to be followed. He reminds Arjuna of his Dharma as a Kshathriya, points out that some of his (Arjuna's) sayings savour of a Sanyasi, and explains when and how Himsa and Ahimsa are to be adopted and by whom. There are people detailed off for each Dharma and each has to do his duty. Any change-over will dislocate smooth working and general advancement, resulting in chaos, complication and trouble.

Celibacy or Brahmacharya in pure form is accepted as a high ideal according to our ancient culture, very helpful in one's advancement in all directions. But will it be advisable or practical if

this high ideal be observed indiscriminately by *all* people? If so, it will only result in extinction of a race. This is why the observance of such an ideal or similar ideals is always regulated in Society by religion (or Vedic laws). *Likewise the indiscriminate observance of the Ahimsa ideal as laid down by Buddha, noblest of all ideals as it may be, is impractical for general observance. The principle is regulated by our Shastras and should not be indiscriminately applied to Society in general.*

An efficient State or Government desirous of maintaining perpetual peace and happiness (internal and external) will therefore do well to follow our Vedic ideal—

शस्त्रेण रक्षिते देशे शास्त्राभ्यासः प्रवर्तते ।

All development of strength (military) must be always wedded to the furtherance and preservation of the nobler, finer and divine instincts in man, and should not be motivated by selfish interests or for destruction resulting from selfish motives.

दण्डसाध्यं यतो राज्यं स दण्डः शास्त्रसंश्रितः ।

Under such protection with Sastra (military strength) the state must develop "Theerthas" and "Varnas," lending to general happiness, health, learning and development in art and science.

At the Adesh of His Holiness, I am sending a copy of this Souvenir to all Educational institu-



tions, enabling the grammar charts of Bhoja's temple of Saraswathi to be committed to memory by the young pupils of the present generation, commencing their lessons in the Magha month of this Sarvajith year.

I should like to mention here—with my apologies for the fantastic notion—that King Bhoja himself must have, following the lines of Bhavabhuti's ideas in his verse

उत्पत्स्यते मम तु कोऽपि समानधर्मा

कालो ह्ययं निरवधिः विपुला च पृथ्वी ।

made a Sankalpa for the preservation of his favourite Lake and College to be taken up in this century on the eve of the first Mahodaya day after India's regaining her Independence. I also imagine that because of his Sankalpa the valuable inscriptions in his Saraswathi temple were by a "fortunate chance" discovered in this century for use from this day. This explains the word *from* used in describing this Souvenir of "Theertha" and "Varna" *from* the Immortal Bhoja's Royal House of the 11th century.

Madras  
9th Feb. 1948. }

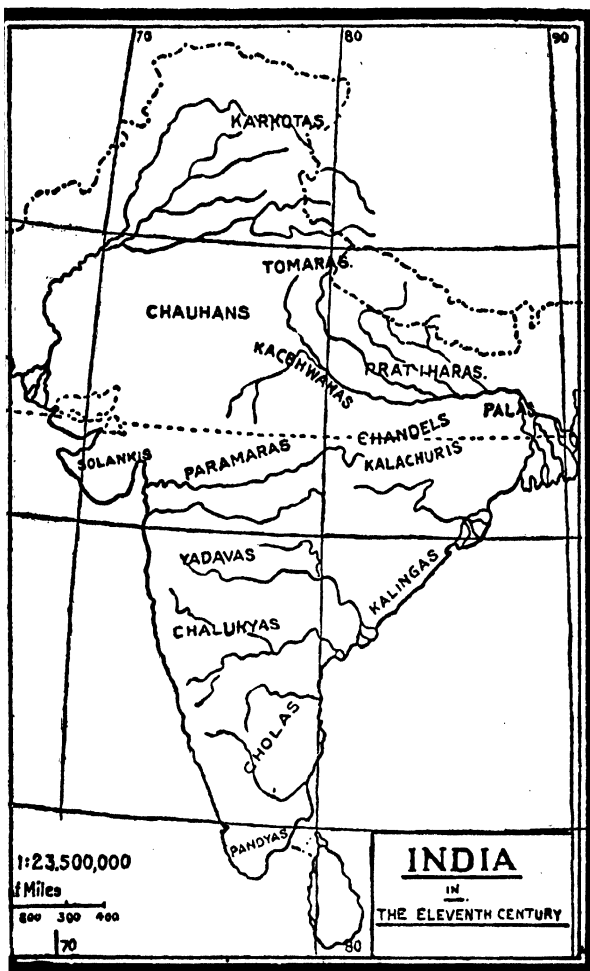
M. K. RANGANATHAN  
Chief Engineer, P.W.D.,  
(Retired)

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## Chapter I

### BHOJA RAJYAM

India in the 10th century A.D. is shown in the map on the left. The rise of the Paramara dynasty dates from the 8th century as traced from the inscriptions. The family which held its sway in Malwa formed the main line and the others were its off-shoots. The rulers of Malwa played an important role in the history of ancient India and once attained a high imperial position. They were sometimes designated as lords of Malwa and sometimes as kings of Avanti. They were also known as rulers of Ujjain and Dhara. In their palmy days the boundary of their realm was as shown in the map. Dhara attained the position of the chief city in Malwa in the 11th century. It was at Dhara (the modern town of Dhar in Central India) that the royal family first established its Government and rebuilt the city in the early part of the 11th century. Dhara is described as "the city of palaces, containing beautiful pleasure gardens on the hills around it. It was famous for its skilful musicians and learned scholars. A high state of civilisation and refinement prevailed there."

Upendra was the first king of the Paramara dynasty (about 810 A.D.). He was particularly famous for performing a "multitude of sacrifices". "The first record tells us that the king reduced the burden of taxes borne by his subjects."

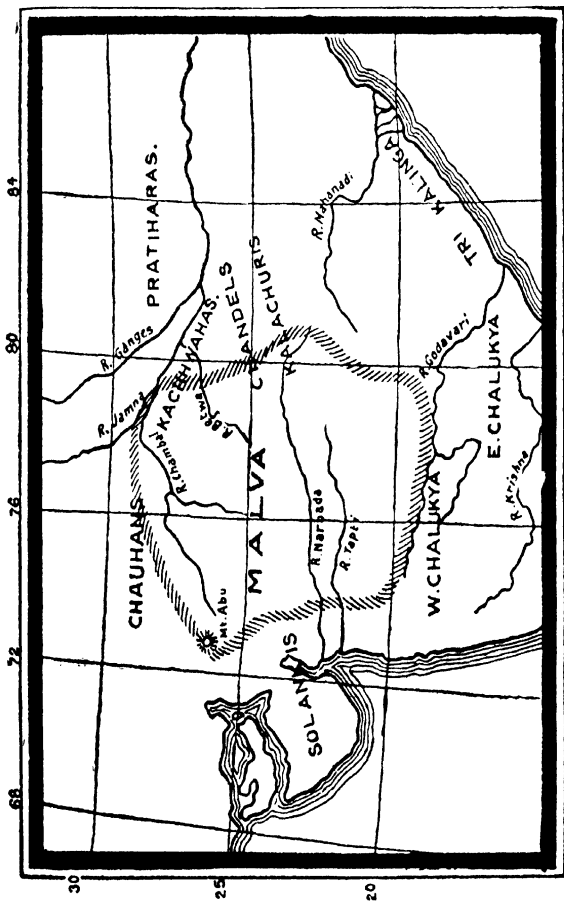
"King Bhoja the Great was the immediate successor of king Vakpathi on the throne of Malwa". "Bhoja was probably a boy of 15 or thereabouts when he assumed

the Government. During his reign (1010—1062 A.D.), the country became very affluent and prosperous and the Paramaras rose to the zenith of their power". "King Bhoja became renowned for his literary and architectural achievements. Like his predecessor, he was an intrepid warrior, an astute general and a great conqueror". "He underwent an extensive course of studies. He acquired a ripe Samskrta scholarship. He studied all the available Samskrta books on king-craft. He became skilful in the use of the thirty-six weapons used in those days in warfare. He mastered the sixty-four arts which had then grown to perfection in India. Above all, he became an accomplished poet and a scholar who could hold his own in learned debates against the greatest scholars of his time." "Great as were Bhoja's military successes, his attainments in the peaceful arts are even more to be admired. His versatile mind did not limit its activity only to the business of war: it was directed towards building up in Malwa an ideal kingdom. Schools were established for the proper education of his subjects. Sufficient emoluments and bounties were granted to those who devoted their lives to the cultivation of literary science. He himself was a great poet and spent his days in the company of erudite scholars". "He has been credited with works in every branch of knowledge, in every Sastra". "His works in several branches are referred to in-

भोजव्याकरणं हेतुत्वं शब्दशास्त्रं प्रवर्तते ॥

असौ हि मालवाधीशो विद्वच्चक्रशिरोमणिः ।

शब्दालङ्कार दैवज्ञ तर्कशास्त्राणि निर्ममे ॥



BHOJA'S DOMINIONS



## III. SILPASASTRA :

(8) Samaranganasutrādhara.

## IV. GRAMMAR :

(9) Śabdānusasanam.

## V. PHILOSOPHY :

(10) Rājamarttānda (Vedānta)

(11) „ (a commentary on Patañjali's  
Yoga Sūtras).

(12) Tatvaprakāśa (Śaivaism).

(13) Siddhāntaśaṅgraha „

(14) Śivatatvaratna Kalikā „

(15) Yukti Kalpataru „

## VI. DHARMA SASTRA :

(16) Vyavahārasamuchaya.

(17) Carucārya.

## VII. ARTHASASTRA :

(18) Chanakyaṇiti (Dandāṇiti) and Putra-  
mārtānda.

## VIII. ALANKARA :

(19) Śarasvatī Kānthabharana.

(20) Śrīgaraprakāśa.

## IX. POETRY AND PROSE :

(21) Rāmāyana champu.

(22) Vidyavinodakāvya.

(23-24) Two Prakṛt poems (lately discovered  
at Dhar).

- (25) Mahakalivijayam (a stotra),
- (26) Srngaramanjari (prose tales).
- (27) Subhasitaprabandha.

#### X. LEXICOGRAPHY :

- (28) Namamalika.

A brief reference here to item 8 above, "Samarangana sutradhara" may not be uninteresting. In the 31st Chapter of this book, Bhoja describes various kinds of machines that are not found in other Silpa works such as

the elephant machine  
 wooden bird machine travelling in the sky  
 wooden vimana machine flying in the air (Aeroplane)  
 door keeper machine  
 soldier machine etc.

It may be remarked that, because the various mechanisms mentioned in the work have not been either seen or heard of by us or by the previous one or two generations, they are mere products of imagination and not actual machines made and put to use. It is not so : for even things which once existed might, in the long run, come to be considered as unreal on account of their disuse and their being forgotten after some centuries. Unfortunately in our country the gap has been too long and in this period our country had gone into the hands of foreigners some of whom took care to kill our art. Further, the tendency of the modern generation here or elsewhere is to believe even in unimaginably difficult feats or products of art and science, if the details of such are published in "The

Scientific American" or "Berlin News" or "Engineering News Record" or such modern current literature. Even without actually seeing them demonstrated, they are prepared to believe in the publication. If the same or similar description be found in some old records or recently discovered old records of the 10th or previous centuries, especially in countries which are now dubbed as backward in scientific advancement or Engineering progress, and where the country has passed through troublous times for some centuries with their histories, literature and works of art mostly destroyed by the foreign rulers of the country, the modern generation finds it difficult to believe in the possibility of such advancement in their own country several centuries ago at a time when the contemporaries in other countries which are now very forward, had not developed even in simple Metallurgy or Astronomy.

The flying machines referred to by Bhoja in his works are described as under in his Samarangana Sutradhara :

लघुदारुमयं महाविहङ्गं दृढसुश्लिष्टतनुं विधाय तस्य ।  
 उदरे रसयन्त्रमादधीत ज्वलनाधारमधोऽस्य चा(ति?ग्नि)पूर्णम् ॥  
 तत्कारुढः पूरुषस्तस्य पक्षद्वन्द्वोच्चालप्रोज्झितेनानिलेन ।  
 सुसस्यान्तः पारदस्यास्य शक्या चिक्षं कुर्वन्नम्बरे याति दूरम् ॥  
 इत्थमेव सुरमन्दिरतुल्यं सञ्चलत्यलघु दारुविमानम् ।  
 आदधीत विधिना चतुरोऽन्तस्तस्य पारदभृतान् दृढकुम्भान् ॥  
 अयःकपालाहितमन्दबह्विप्रतप्तत्कुम्भभुजा गुणेन ।  
 व्योम्नो श्लगित्याभरणत्वमेति सन्तसर्गर्जद्रसराजशक्या ॥  
 वृत्तसन्धितमथायसयन्त्रं तद् विधाय रसपूरितमन्तः ।  
 उच्चदेशविनिधापिततप्तं सिंहनादमुरजं विदधाति ॥

A close study of the above verses gives a fairly general idea of the working of the machines. It may be asked why the writer has not described the method of constructing these war machines. He has himself given the answer in his book :

यन्त्राणां घटना नोक्ता गुप्त्यर्थं नाज्ञतावशात् ।

तत्र हेतुरयं ज्ञेयो व्यक्ता नैते फलप्रदाः ॥

The meaning of the last line in this verse is : “ In case the methods are revealed in the work, then every one not initiated in the art will try to construct the machines and the attempt made may not only not achieve success, but bring about difficulties or danger. Do we not have the same restrictions now for the manufacture of “ Atom Bomb ”? Bhoja also refers to the qualifications necessary for constructing machines :

पारम्पर्यं कौशलं सोपदेशं शास्त्राभ्यासो वास्तुकर्मोद्यमो धीः ।

सामग्रीयं निर्मला यस्य सोऽस्मिंश्चित्राण्येवं वेत्ति यन्त्राणि कर्तुम् ॥

It is not uncommon in the case of highly useful mechanisms, especially for war purposes, to keep unrevealed the methods of construction.

The flying machines referred to appear to work on Mercury and mercury vapour as the working fluid. The Aeroplane is made of very light and tough wood, the general shape is that of a big bird. In its body is fixed the prime-mover working on mercury. Heat is applied from an external source below the mercury bottle. There are also some more similar mercury bottles which, I presume, are intended for the low pressure fluid. The engine unit must be of the hot

air engine type used in the Jost fan run by a kerosene burner. The hot vapour under pressure is the working agent for the engines. The exhausted low pressure vapour goes into the other bottles. Apparently the fluid is used over and over again, like water and steam in a steam plant of the condensing type. The motion from the engine works the wings of the plane and they begin to flap as regulated by the pilot who is seated inside the plane. I cannot assert from the description that propellers of the modern type were used, but it is clear that the two wings move and flap causing the movement of the whole machine in air. The machine can travel high and far. The boiling mercury and its vapour working the engine gives a loud rumbling sound which can be heard even when the machine is flying high. There seems to be some arrangement to bye-pass the exhaust through a siren, given a sound very much like the roaring of a lion. When the machine flies over enemy's camp and the lion-roar siren is also worked, it is said that the war elephants of the enemy's camp take to flight without heeding their Mahouts with their ankusas.

“Hindu scholars can easily understand how one author writing so many works is easily possible. In India, from boyhood, scholars are trained to carry all books they read in their memory, so that when they in their turn begin to write books they need not spread on their tables all the books that they have learnt on the subject. Drawing from the inexhaustable stores of memory, they can write new books especially on the Sastras at a rate so fast that the foreigner cannot understand their speed of composition.”

“It is not by the number of his works that Bhoja’s name has been immortalised by posterity, but by his daily intercourse with scholars and by the play of wit and the flow of poetic images that characterised his daily literary Darbar.”

“The Raja was accessible to the poorest of his subjects. He used to wander far and near, both by day and night, for the purpose of acquainting himself with the condition of his subjects, their wants and disabilities. The most ordinary citizens, even those who followed professions considered to be very low, could rebuke the king if they thought themselves called upon to do so.

## Chapter II

### THE TEMPLE OF SARASWATI

(OR THE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF DHARA)

“Bhoja’s activities in the field of architecture deserve special notice. The Udayapur prasasti credits him with the building of a large number of temples. Today very few remains of his extensive work can be traced, owing to the fact that, since the final conquest of Malwa by the Moslems, a large number of ancient Hindu temples have been converted into mosques by the new rulers.” “Bhoja founded at Dhara his famous University called the Temple of Saraswati where lived a host of Scholars who must have helped Bhoja in his literary activity.” “Bhoja was well known for his munificence and liberality. In his Ujjain plate he lays down the following maxim, which seems to have been the motto of his life :

“Of wealth, which is as fleeting as a flash of lightning or a bubble of water, there are two good fruits or uses, and only two : one is its employment in charities and the other is the maintenance thereby of other men’s fame.”

On one occasion when the king was going round on his daily circuit, he happened to reach the bank of the river. Then he saw a Brahmana, fording the river with a load of firewood on his head. The king accosted him with the hemistich,—

‘How deep is the water, O Brahmana ?  
The Brahmana completed the line with,—

‘O king, it is knee-deep.’

The king continued,—

‘How were you reduced to this state?’

The Brahmana replied,—

‘Not everywhere are there patrons like you,” all the phrases put together forming one couplet or Sloka. The king gave a large present to the poor scholar and dismissed him.

“All this speaks for the broadness of his mind. As a conqueror, as a poet, and as a builder of architecture, he deserves a high place among the sovereigns of ancient India. As a benevolent monarch he had hardly any parallel. He left behind him an abiding impression that survives even to this day.”

“In the 11th century, this Malwa desa was one of the chief centres of Hindu Religion. The caste system was at the basis of the Hindu social structure. The Paramara kings lent their powerful support to the maintenance of its integrity.” “There were numerous Hindu Monasteries which fostered the study of religious scriptures. At the head of each monastery was a Superintendent highly distinguished for learning”. The people observed many religious ceremonies with great devotion. The most important of these seems to have been the ‘Vasantotsava’ or the Spring Festival. This was celebrated amidst various amusements, dramas occasionally being acted. The other ceremonial events of significance were : Diwali, Sendhavadeva, Chadragrahana (Lunar eclipse) Pavitraka, Mahavaisakha, Suryagrahana (Solar eclipse).



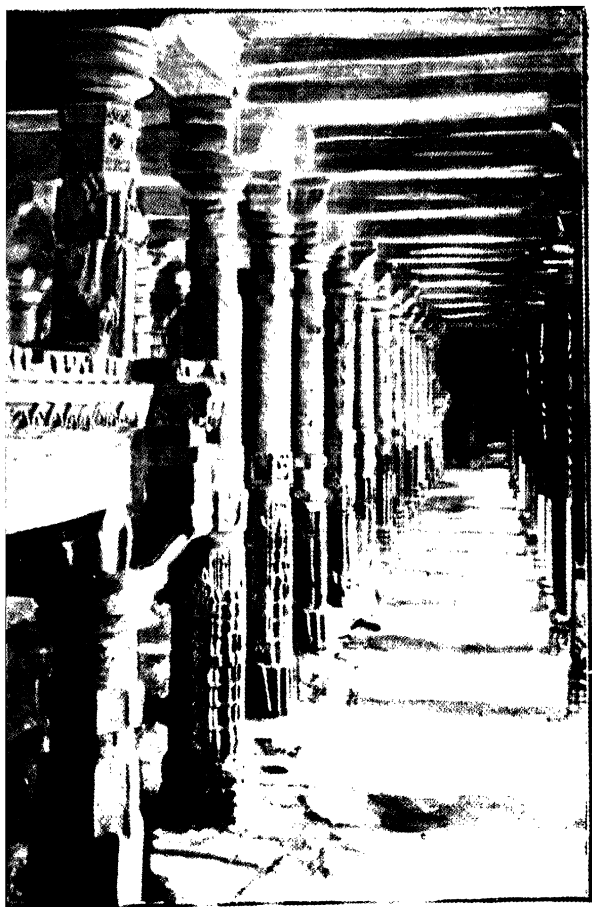
“The king once summoned a convention, in which the representatives of the different sects assembled. On his putting to them the inquiry as to what constituted the true path of salvation, each spoke in favour of what was enjoined in his peculiar religious doctrine. Subsequently, a compromise was effected, by which all agreed to work together for the solution of the problem, going carefully into the merits of the different authorities. In six month’s time they arrived at the conclusion that “By mediation one obtains salvation, regardless of the religion to which one adheres.” The Goddess Sarasvati is said to have appeared to the king in this connection, with the following message :

“Are you awake ?

You must listen to the religion of the Buddhists,  
but You Must practise that of the Jains,  
You must mediate on the supreme Siva.”

It may be inferred from this that Bhoja followed a policy of toleration in religious matters.

“The modern Kamal Mouli mosque at Dhar was originally a College established by Bhoja. It is *still* known as Bhoja Sala (Bhoja’s School) to the local Hindu population.” The modern structure is quite Mohamadan in style and was constructed with the materials of the Saraswathi temple (University College of Dhar) which stood on the same site. Dr. Bhandarkar thinks that this temple is the one mentioned in the Parijata Manjari. In this temple was enshrined the figure of Saraswathi, a munified copy of which (Bust only) is the frontispiece of this book. This image of Saraswathi is



PRAYER HALL  
KAMAL MAULA MOSQUE DHAR



MIHRAB OF THE KAMAL MA'LA MOSQUE, DHAR

now in the custody of the British Museum at London, and the Dominion Government of India may do well to get it back for our record and worship. " In 1034 A.D., by the orders of Bhoja, a famous sculptor executed this image. The Goddess is in the ' Abhanga ' pose with four hands, the front pair being now imperfect, half of each having disappeared. She wears a crown, and her earrings hang down to her shoulders, whilst round her neck is a pearl necklace, and a pearl-embroidered band encircles her breast; her waist is also decorated all round. The Devi is in meditative mood and her face is lovely and serene. An expert iconographist remarks that the image is a *Chef D'Oeuvre* of rare beauty, in its exquisite serenity of pose, in its entrancing and balancing rhythm, in the elegance and suavity of its aquiline features, and in the general restraint in the treatment of the anatomy, which is almost free from any exaggeration. To us, the emotion of its static conception, almost alternating between a ' rajasik ' and a ' satvik,' is most appealing."

The iconoclastic Musalman rulers of Malwa in the 15th century destroyed the temples with which Bhoja beautified Dhara and used the materials for new structures of their own, like the Kamal Mouli,

"where not only pillars and building stones from Hindu temples one of which was known to the inhabitants as Raja Bhoja's School, probably his famous Sarada temple where a university was located by him have been utilized, but a large portion of the flooring of the praying chamber is

paved with black marble slabs, formerly covered with Sanskrit inscriptions; and even the lining of the *Mihrab* itself was, by a *fortunate chance*, found to consist of similar slabs, in this case with the engraved faces merely turned inwards and the inscriptions thereon unharmed."

The Story of the "fortunate chance" is this:

"At the angle of junction of the side and black wall of the *Mihrab* are some holes long enough to admit a hand and arm, and it was entirely owing to the fortunate chance of some one passing his hand through one of these apertures and discovering letters on the back surface of the stones that the existence of the inscription was revealed. The method employed to obtain a record of these inaccessible inscriptions is also worth telling. Partial impressions were taken in the first instance by an ingenious system of \* \* \*

This process was, of course extremely laborious but was deemed well-paid by the results, so long at least, as there appeared no chance of removing the stones."

Since then the slabs were removed from the structure. They were found to contain two long inscriptions and several fragments (See map attached). They are very important in as much as they give us an idea of the method of teaching that was pursued in those ancient days. The first is sketched out by the windings of a single serpent. The second is made up

वर्ण माला

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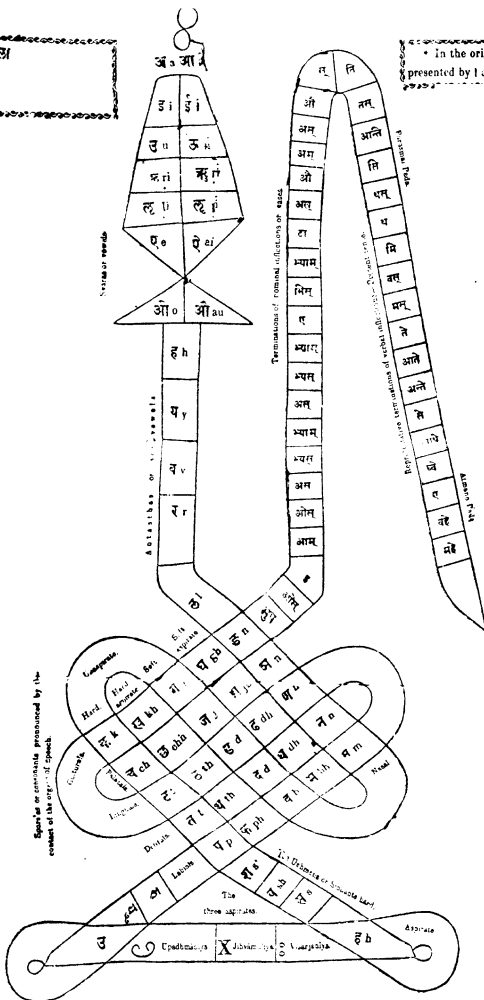
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\* In the original  $\mathfrak{A}$  is re. presented by 1 and  $\mathfrak{A}$  by -1

Single snake alphabetical inscription.

वर्ण माला

In the original अ is represented by I and आ by -I



Single snake alphabetical inscription.

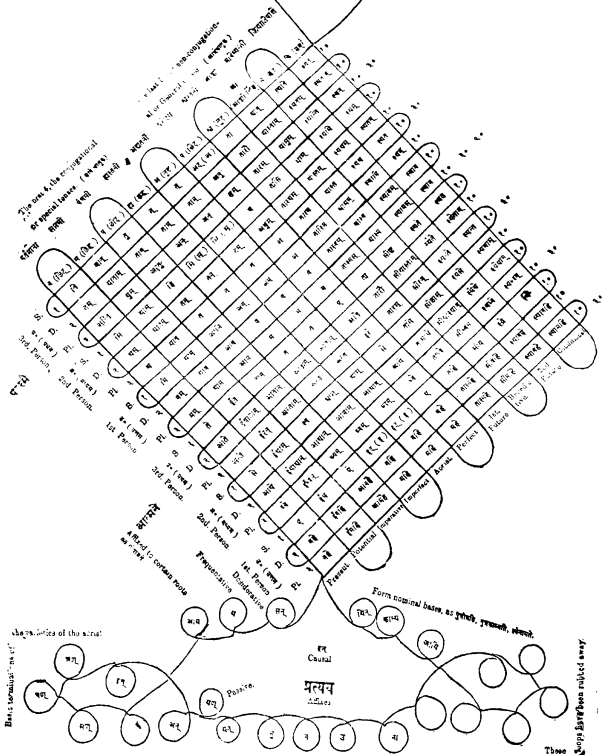
१. ऐयमुहपाविज्जनरवर्ममहीभुजोः ।  
महेशस्यामिनोवर्णतिथ्यसिद्धासिपत्रिका ॥

Some Orthographical peculiarities in the Original which is in old Nagari characters. —  
(a) i = e, u = au  
(b) The mark stroke instead of being put over letters are marked by vertical strokes prefixed to them; as, ए = ऐ, -उ = आने & एत = अने.  
(c) ऋ = ए, ॠ = इ.  
(d) ऌ = ए, ॡ = इ.  
(e) ॢ = ए, ॣ = इ.



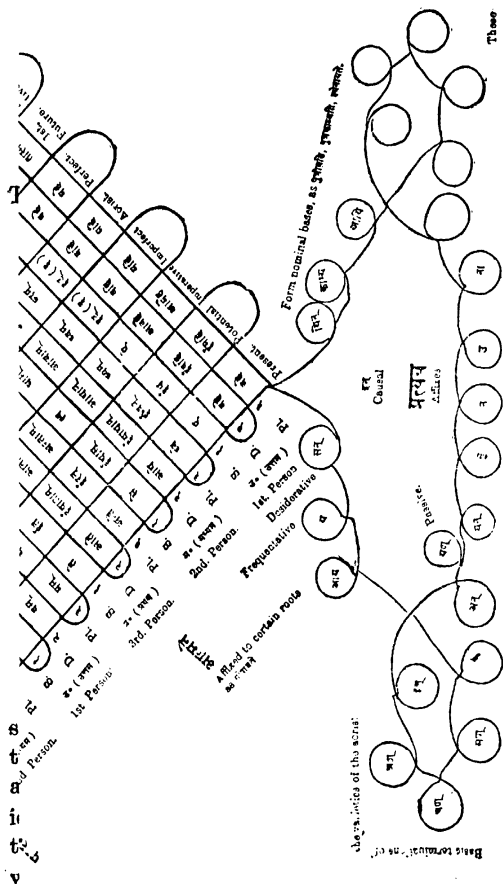
उत्पादितोदेवय कण्ठावकृपाणिह ।  
कवीनांच नृपाणांच वेगो वक्षसि भोविनः ॥

संस्कृत भातु प्रत्ययमाडा



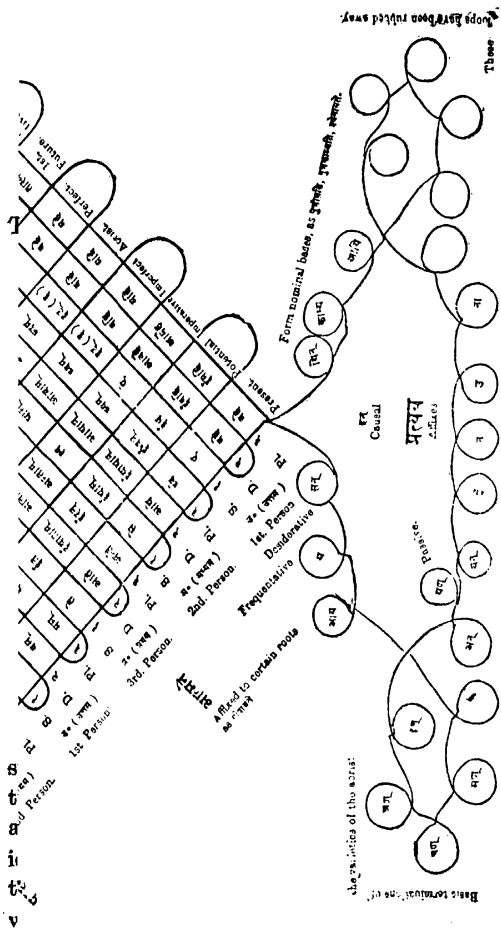
Conjugational signs of the 1st, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th and 9th classes of verbs.  
Two snake grammatical Inscription.





Conjugational signs of the 1st, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th and 9th classes of verbs.

**Two snake grammatical Inscription.**



Conjugational signs of the 1st, 4th, 5th, 7th, 8th and 9th classes of verbs.

Two snake grammatical Inscription.

of the intertwining of two serpents. Both these records were certainly set up there for the guidance of the pupils. A similar mode of teaching was followed all over the country and charts of exactly the same type are also found in the temple of Mahakala at Ujjain and in a fane at Un."

"The grammatical serpentine inscriptions though actually incised a little after Bhoja's time, represent the initial grammatical teaching imparted in Bhoja's Sarasvati Temple. Among other things they show that the *Katantra* treatise on grammar supplanted Panini in North India from the 1st century A.D., till it was revived in Benares in the XVII century. The following account of these serpentine inscriptions is entirely taken from a note on the subject by Mr. K. K. Lele, History Officer of Dhar State.

"There are two Sanskrit grammatical inscriptions in the Nagari characters, on two stone pillars in the mosque near the tomb of Moulana Kamaluddin at Dhar. The mosque is still popularly called Bhoja Raja Ki Nisal or Raja Bhoja's College. This corroborates the fact that the mosque was built on the site of Raja Bhoja's College, held in a spacious and splendid temple of Sarasvati, the Goddess of Learning and Arts, discovered in the same mosque in 1902. There is ample evidence to show that the mosque was built not only with the materials of the temple, but on the very site of it. The existence of numerous mutilated large Nagari inscriptions on the pavement and of a part of the plinth of the original temple with a Go-Mukha on the north-east corner proves the fact beyond doubt. Moreover, the image itself of

Sarasvati (Goddess of Learning) recording its installation in the temple by Raja Bhoja himself in Samvat 1091 (A. D. 1035) exists now in the British Museum.

“The two pillars bearing the inscriptions are among those that support the dome of the prayer hall, one on each side of the raised pulpit. The one near the pulpit containing the Sanskrit alphabet faces the east. The other, at a distance from the pulpit to the south, contains the Sanskrit verbal terminations, facing the south with two Sanskrit verses inscribed over it containing the names of the two successors of Raja Bhoja.

“The inscriptions have been called Sarpa Bandhas because the letters and terminations are inscribed in the oblong open spaces formed by the twisting of serpents length wise and cross-wise. The tables are ingenious in design and beautiful and mysterious in appearance. The pillars, being of gray limestone unsuited for engraving, have undergone partial decay in some places. The surface has been cut through by lines which have deformed some of the letters. The right corner of the base of one of the inscriptions has altogether disappeared. Most of the other numerous Nagari inscriptions lying in this building were engraved on durable black stone slabs. Many of them were used for the pavement of the central prayer hall with their inscriptions erased, while those that have been recently discovered, whether full or fragmentary have their inscriptions intact. The pillar inscription are also tolerably well preserved. Probably their inconspicuous position has saved them from the fate which other inscriptions in this building have undergone. These

inscriptions are called grammatical because they deal with grammatical matters. One of them contains a chart of classified Samskrta alphabet and the other, tables of verbal conjugational terminations like similar illustrations in a modern school. The alphabetical chart is made up by the windings of one serpent only. It contains the Samskrta alphabet\* in Nagari character of the XIth or XII century A.D. and the chief inflectional terminations of nouns and verbs. The former are given in classes in the body of the serpent and the latter in

\* *Note*:—The Sanskrit Alphabet may be said to be perfect and comprehensive. It is sometimes claimed that there are in other languages certain alphabets which are not found in Sanskrit. For instance, 'F' in English and ஃ and ழ of the Tamil Alphabet. I shall explain here how these are also found in Sanskrit, which can therefore be said to be quite comprehensive. There are no alphabets in any other languages which are not covered in Sanskrit.

The ழ of Tamil takes its origin from the ञ of Sanskrit. This will be apparent from the following observations: the month of "मार्गशीर्ष" has the name மார்சுழி in Tamil, "ञ" being displaced by "ழ".

The Sama Veda contains thousand Sakas and at present only two are current or known (the Chandoga Sama and Thalavakara Sama). These two are referred to distinctly and separately in the Tamil Thevaram (தேவாரம்) and Tiruvamozhi (திருவாமொழி). Of these, the Thalavakara Sama is now extant though very slightly in certain parts in the Districts of Tanjore, Malayalam and Tinnevely. When they are examined, it is clearly seen that the alphabet "ञ" in the other Sakas is written as "ழ" in Tamil in the Talavakara Sama. The "ञ" therefore of the Sanskrit

the tail. The consonants do not differ much from those in common use now, but the vowels have quite different shapes. The letters of the alphabet are more than half an inch in length and breadth, while those of the terminations in the tail are much smaller. The whole inscription is 2 feet and 3 inches in height and one foot in breadth. There are altogether 55 letters and symbols, and 21 nominal and 18 verbal inflectional terminations. As the alphabet plays the chief part in this inscription, it is called Alphabetical. The first letter at the top is probably the letter क्ष (Ksha) which is the last but one letter in the usual serial order of the Sanskrit alphabet ज्ञ (Jna) being the last. It is placed at the top and with the first letter अ (A) it probably indicates the अक्षमाला or Indian rosary. The letters begin with vowels and end with the three Visarags (aspirates) Visarajaniya,

alphabet is preserved in Tamil as “*ḥ*” and has no other substitute. This will also be apparent from the order in which the alphabets are written in Sanskrit and in Tamil. The order in Sanskrit is अ, इ, ए, व, श, ष, the Tamil alphabet also follows the same order. The “*ष*” of Sanskrit coming after श is omitted in Tamil as the Tamil “*ṣ*” is used both for the Sanskrit “*च*” and “*श*”. Hence the “*श*” of the Sanskrit is slipped over in the Tamil alphabet after *ṣ*. The next alphabet in Sanskrit, viz., “*च*” as explained above is preserved as “*ḥ*” in Tamil. Hence the order in the Tamil alphabet *ṣ*, *ṣ*, *ṣ*, *ḥ*.

The Tamil “*ṣ*” is covered in Sanskrit by the 2nd variety Jihwa Muliya of the Sanskrit 3 Visargas (Aspirates) called Visarajaniya, Jihwa Muliya and Upadhmaniya. The English ‘F’ is covered by the 3rd of the above three varieties of Visarga, viz. Upadh-Maniya.

Jihva Muliya and Upadhmaniya. It is not known why the first two vowels अ (a) and आ (ā) are not given in full. So also the object of giving इ, यु, and उ in the left hand side of the triangular base is not clearly seen.

“The table of verbal terminations is bigger in size being  $2\frac{1}{2}$  feet in height by  $1\frac{1}{2}$  feet in breadth. It is made up by the intertwining of two serpents probably a male and a female one. It contains chiefly the 18 personal terminations of the ten tenses and moods, of classical Samskrta verbs (excepting only the Vaidika लेट्) arranged in columns. There are three numbers in Sanskrit, and two sets of terminations (Parasmai pada and Atmane pada) for each of the tenses and moods; so for the three persons in each, there are altogether 180 terminations, ninety of each set as shown under :—

Parasmai Pada				Atmane pada		
3rd. P.	Sing.	Dual.	Pl.	Sing.	Dual.	Pl.
2nd. P.	„	„	„	„	„	„
1st. P.	„	„	„	„	„	„

$$\text{Total } 9 + 9 = 18$$

Grand total for ten tenses = 180

“Thus there are altogether  $18 \times 10 = 180$  verbal terminations, 90 of each set, given in the table. They are duly numbered on the right hand side and are arranged in slanting columns from the left to the right, and are given in the spaces, left between the zigzag cross turnings of the serpents. The two sets of terminations (parasmai and Atmane), the three persons (the 3rd

or Prathama, the 2nd or Madhyama and the 1st or Uttama) and three numbers (Singular, Dual and Plural) are noted on the left hand side in order. The names of the tenses and moods are marked at the top of the columns by the initial letter of each. They are as under :—

INITIALS	FULL NAME	PANINI'S NAME	ENGLISH NAME
1. व	वर्तमाना	1 लट्	Present.
2. स	सप्तमी (7th)	7 लिङ्	Potential.
3. प	पञ्चमी (5th)	5 लोट्	Imperative.
4. ह्य	ह्यस्तनी	6 लङ्	Imperfect.
5. अ	अद्यतनी	8 लुङ्	Aorist.
6. प	परोक्षा	2 लिट्	Perfect.
7. श्व	श्वस्तनी	3 लुट्	1st. Future.
8. आ	आशीः	9 आशीलिङ्	Benedictive.
9. भ	भविष्यन्ती	4 लृट्	2nd. Future.
10. क्ति	क्रियातिपत्तिः	10 लङ्	Conditional.

“ Besides the primitive basis, Sanskrit verbs have several derivative bases showing causality, desire, intensity etc. These and other details are indicated in the round loops in the triangular base below the principal table of terminations. The heading of the inscription is अथ धातुप्रत्यय (याः) of which the words “अथ धातु” stand between the heads of the serpents and the last word प्रत्यय straight down in the base. The letters in this inscription are smaller and therefore, in several places somewhat indistinct.



“The names of the tenses and the details given in the base are not taken from the Great Sanskrit Grammarian Panini, cir. 500 B. C. They are taken from the Katantra (also called Kalapa or Kaumara) a small manual of Sanskrit Grammar, which appears to have been specially prepared in order to simplify the subject in 1st century A. D. which became very popular in North India for a long time.

“This grammar is still a text-book in Bengal and was so much in use in old times in other places from Kashmir in the north to Maharastra in the South and has taken such deep root in the soil, that a few early sutras (formulas) of it are still learnt by heart, in every indigenous Vernacular school” of Malva, Gujarat and other parts of India, under the name of Sidhā. Every child's first lesson begins with Sidhā ; but in the mouth of unlettered Pāndyas (Pedagogues) and their ruder pupils the text has been so corrupted that it can now be hardly recognised to be Samskr̥ta. For illustration threer or four corruptions are quoted below :—

सीधो यरणा, समामुनाया, चले चले दीसा दी सथेरा.

The correct sutras (aphorisms) of Kātantra run thus:

सिद्धोवर्णसप्तान्नायः ॥१॥ तत्र चतुर्दशादौ स्वराः ॥२॥

“Above this table and over the heads of the serpents, there are engraved two Sanskrit stanzas of the Anustubh Metre, These supply important historical data and raise the inscription, from a mere grammatical curiosity to the status of a valuable historical document. The stanzas indicate the period to which they belong ;

they confirm the tradition about Bhoja Sala or Bhoja's School and indicate the site of Bhoja's School."

"I. In the first couplet occur the names of Udayaditya and Naravarma, (father and son), in the second, that of Udayaditya alone.

"Now Udayaditya and Naravarma were the almost immediate successors of the famous Raja Bhoja, who ruled at Dhar during the 1st half of the 11th century and whose name, as a scholar, writer and great patron of scholars and writers, has become a household word in India. They, therefore, must have reigned at the end of the XIth and the beginning of the XIIth century A.D. Hence the two stanzas in question, cannot be, in all probability, less than 800 years old. The grammatical tables themselves may perhaps be older still. The mosque in which these inscriptions are now found was built by Sultan Mahmud Sha Khilji of Mandu about 861 Hijri or 1457 A.D. as can be seen from the Persian inscription on the gate-way leading to the tomb.

"II and III-Both the serpentine pillar inscriptions being grammatical are of educational interest and must have been designed by some ingenious teacher and permanently engraved on the pillars as charts in modern Schools. They may also have some mystical or occult meaning.

"The two Sanskrit stanzas at the top read as under in modern Nagari:—

एकेयमुदयादित्यनरवर्ममहीभुजोः ॥

महेश स्वामिनोर्वर्णस्थित्यै सिद्धासिपुत्रिका ॥ १ ॥

उदयादित्य देवस्य वर्णनागकृपाणिका ॥  
कवीनां च नृपाणां च वेषो वक्षसि रोपितः ॥ २ ॥

### PURPORT

(1) This Sword of Kings Udayaditya and Naravarma, the worshippers of Siva, is ready equally for the protection of the (four) Varnas (classes of society) and of the Varnas or alphabet (meaning learning).

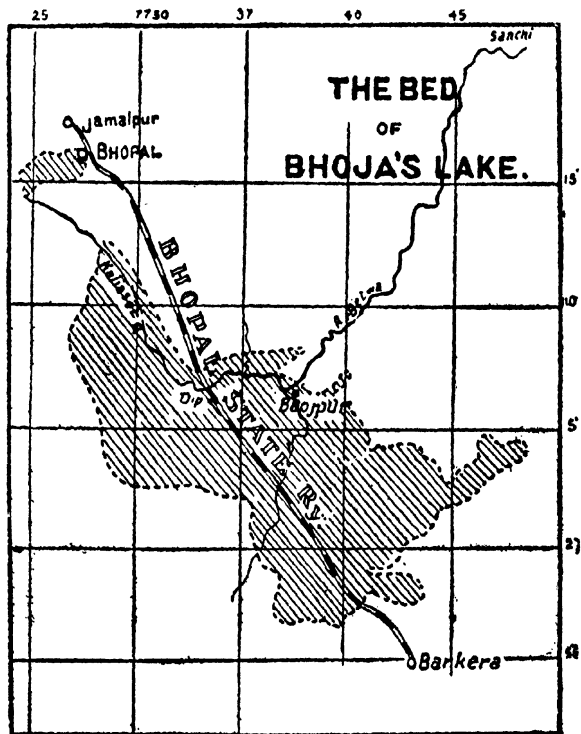
(2) This serpentine Sword of King Udayaditya intended for the protection of letters (learning) and social classes has been set up as a badge for the breasts of poets (scholars) and kings (Rulers)."

The kings of old, following the old Hindu and Vedic ideals, took upon themselves as their duty to maintain the standard of learning and the development in all arts and sciences, reached in their countries. The word "Varna" occurring in the 2 stanzas quoted above refers to letters (learning) and also classes of society. The kings were responsible, by the use of their military strength when required, to put down any disturbances from inside or outside their country which tend to affect the development of science, or the peaceful avocations or pursuits followed by the different classes of society. Adequate facilities were always provided for the different professionals to follow their own pursuits ordained by custom, taste or inclination, without any difficulties or disturbances from outside.

"Malwa desa can claim the highest credit for her rich contributions in the stock of Sanskrit literature. In those ancient days, few provinces of India witnessed the birth of so many literary magnates, within so short a

period, as did Malwa during the reign of the Paramara dynasty. The literature of a country is admittedly the crucial test of its culture, and Malwa, through her possession of so valuable, varied and rich a literature, has proved her high achievement in that direction. At the back of all these constructive movements were Paramara kings. Their unstinted liberality, never failing encouragement and generous sympathy always served as a driving force towards the progressive realisation of an ideal State.





### Chapter III

## THE BHOJPUR SARAS (LAKE)

The most wonderful of Bhoja's constructions was the formation of the Bhojpur lake, a feat of Engineering forgotten by all till its ancient bed was located with great pains by Col. Kincaid. The lake water-spread in the valley of the Betwa river covers an extent of 250 Sq. miles; the water spread of the proposed Ramapadasagar in the Godavari river is about 527 Sq. Miles.

"Twenty miles south of the city of Bhopal are the remains of the ancient city of Bhojpur. Tradition ascribes its foundation to king Bhoja. Not far from it to the west is the Bhojpur Lake (see map) which was once the greatest of its kind in India. The holy Betwa river in its upper reaches sweeps round hills, glides down broad valleys and races down narrow glens and the region round has been the focus of religious and commercial activities since the days of Gautama, the Buddha. Here the first Buddha Acharyas preached and wrote their books." It seems king Bhoja was once attacked by a malady which threatened his life. No physician in the kingdom was able to cure him, but at last a recluse prescribed a remedy which, if properly applied, would definitely assure his recovery. The prescription was that the king should take a long course of baths in water supplied daily by three hundred and sixty five streams and expert engineers were therefore sent all round the Vindhya hill to discover a place that should fulfil these conditions." "The Royal Engineers

set about to discover a proper site for the construction of the lake, and after long, tedious and expensive search, found it in the region of the head-waters of the Betwa, 20 miles from where Bhopal now stands. Here was an extensive valley hemmed in by a ring of hills and in the hill-wall, there were only two gaps, one a little more than a hundred and the other about 500 yards wide. Bhoja's engineers spanned them by two wonderful dams, each consisting of a bund with an earthen core, faced on the inner and outer sides with immense blocks of stone. The skill of the artisans of the period can be judged from the fact that the blocks were laid, one on the other without mortar, but yet their edges fitted so truly that the bund was absolutely water-tight. The greater bund was about 40 feet high and 100 feet broad on the top on which runs today a part of the road from Bhopal to Kaliakheri."

"But when the streams that flowed into the valley were counted, it was found that they were only 359. The engineers cast about for means to bring up the streams to the mystic number 365 that were wanted by the sage; then a chief of the Gond, who then (as now) inhabited this bit of the Dandak forest, pointed out another stream near, which was fed by six hill-springs. The chief's name was Kaliya and the grateful engineers called the river Kaliasot. But the Kaliasot which could increase the catchment area of the lake by about 500 square miles, flowed outside the well-enclosed Betwa valley which was to be the bed of the proposed lake. To utilise the waters of the Kaliasot, the



engineers had to build near Bhopal twenty miles off, a magnificent cyclopean dam, constructed exactly like the other two, but immensely broad for its length and height. Thus was found a high level storage reservoir from which the surplus waters could feed the lower lake during the three dry months that succeeded the rains; from here 'the river ran at right angles to its former course round the hills into the Betwa valley and became a most valuable feeder to the constructors of the great lake, because it carried the surplus waters of the upper lake into the larger lake.' The greater dam was so constructed as to turn the Kaliasot into the Betwa and from the top of the bund, the old bend of the Kaliasot can even now be seen. The bund itself is now so covered with jungle as to be invisible unless when very carefully scrutinised."

"Thus was formed the Bhojpur lake, in its days the largest and the most beautiful lake that adorned India, presenting to the view 'one unbroken sheet of water, except where islands added to its beauty'.\* It was in places a hundred feet deep and on all sides surrounded

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\* I imagine that it was with the Sankalpa and blessings of the sage (Yathiswara) who prescribed the formation of a Saras or "Theertha" to cure Bhoja's malady, that the Royal Engineers succeeded in hitting upon a suitable locality for forming the reservoir. Examining the geological details of the catchment area of this Bhoja's lake from current records, it is found that the hills from which the 365 streams take their source contain iron oxide, Manganese oxide, gold in rare quantities (alluvial gold), hornblende and also some copper ores in slight quantities. The mineral waters flowing down from these hills, when collected in a

by high hills. It was provided with a waste weir by means of 'a cutting through the solid rocks of one of the lower hills on the east side.' 'It is at the blunt apex of a triangular valley opening from near the great dam, and is probably two miles from it in a direct line. Its position so far from the dam accords another proof of the practical ability of the Hindu engineers of the time; for any error in the levels would have quickly destroyed the dam which, though stone faced on both sides, was filled in by earth and could not long have withstood an overflow. There are signs on its rocky and unbroken sides which show that high water-mark was within six feet of its top.' The surplus water weir is now buried in impenetrable jungle and was accidentally discovered by Col. Kincaid. When the waste weir valley was accessible a visit to it at the close of the rains would have been well worth making, for there could be seen the overflow falling down in broken cascades into the Betwa 100 feet below, and could be heard the waterfall roaring like thunder. The lake was a broad sheet of sweet water, refreshing alike to the eyes dried, and the lips parched, by the hot winds. From the broad bosom of the lake peeped now and again green islands relieving the monotony of the view; the village of Dip (from Sanskrit Dvīpa, island) standing on a small hill and now a station on the Bhopal State Railway, testifies to the fact that it was in

reservoir, were able to cure Bhoja of his malady. The use of such mineral waters for baths is quite within the common knowledge of modern tourists here and abroad.

Bhoja's time an island two miles in length spread on a hill standing in the borders of Bhojpur lake. Here and there the jungle was cleared, breaking the verdure which clothed the hills round the lake and ran right down to the water's edge and towns were built. One such town built first below the waste weir was Bhojpur where more than one group of large flat stones mark the sites of Bhoja's boat-houses. In that ruined city are the remains of a temple celebrated for his gigantic polished quartzite lingam. Not far from the northern end of the lake was built Bhopal, Bhoja's pala (bund) on which nestles the ancient fort to the west of the modern city; the fort is on the brink of the storage tank already described and is filled with remains of Jain temples and the fine sculptures that characterise them. Every morning Bhoja would sail on boats across the lake and leaving them in the boat-house, would inspect the fort or visit the temples on the other shore and return to his palace for his mid-day meal. The vast watery plain cooled the atmosphere all round for several miles and held up the water so that the river Betwa was never in floods. Bhilsa and other towns rose below the flood level of the river and they enjoyed immunity from inundation which they do not today, for this wonderful piece of ancient Hindu engineering was destroyed by Shah Hussain, a Mandu Sultan, a little more than 400 years after it was built. He coveted the fertile land which formed the silt-covered bed of the lake for agricultural purposes and ordered the smaller of the dams to be broken. It required an army of labourers to work for three months to destroy it and

three years elapsed before the lake was emptied of its waters and thirty before the bed became dry enough for human habitation ; but Shah Hussain did not live to see the consummation of his hopes. Then numerous little towns arose which now stud the valley where the lake existed ; round the towns green wheat waves where the cool waters once rolled and the line of the Bhopal State Railway runs where Bhoja's pleasure boats sailed in the breeze, and India's sons pass across the bed of the lake on which sailed their forefathers of nine centuries ago, ignorant of the history of the site, notwithstanding the silent testimony of the great bund, the ruined temples and the large stone pillars of Bhoja's boat-house, past which they are hauled by the railway engines snorting with a speed unknown to Bhoja's boats which once silently slid along. Human eyes stare unintelligent on the jungle which has grown all round, the verdant hills stand grimly looking on and laughing at the mutations of human ambitions."

The Bhojpur lake stands today as a testimony to the extent of the engineering skill and workmanship\* achieved by the people of Malwa under the magnificent rule of king Bhoja.

\* Mr. Vincent Smith writes in his "History of Fine Arts in India and Ceylon" : "The Hindus were among the earliest of mankind to attain mechanical perfection and facility in the treatment of the hardest stones, executing with facility many operations which would baffle the skill of the most expert modern lapidary."

## Chapter IV

# SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE TIMES OF BHOJA

(AS PER HINDU OR VEDIC IDEALS)

“Social life in India has not much changed since Vedic times. Many of the customs referred to in the mantras of the Vedas can still be observed unchanged especially in the villages. Not so the religious life of the people. Luckily, the social and religious life of the people in the age of king Bhoja have been described by an impartial and well-informed foreigner who resided in India during that period.

Abu Raihan Muhammad Ibn Ahmad Al Beruni was a councillor of the Prince of Khwarizm (Chorasmia, now Khiva) and, when Mahmud annexed the province, was taken as a hostage to Ghazni (1017). He was permitted to live in India and being a learned *Munahjjim* (Astrologer—Astronomer), he was attracted by the Indian treatment of his favourite subject, mastered Sanskrit and Sanskrit lore, and wrote his *Indika*. He was one of the earliest and most accurate foreign scholars of Indian books and his book, containing quotations from thirty Sanskrit books, is a very valuable account of the Indian culture of the XIth Century. He was very much attracted by Indian philosophy, especially by the *Bhagavad Gita* which he quotes frequently.”

“His fairness is proved by the following statement :

“The Hindus believe with regard to God that he is one, eternal, without beginning and end, acting

by free will, almighty, allwise, living, giving life, ruling, preserving; one who in his sovereignty is unique, beyond all likeness and unlikeness, and that he does not resemble anything nor does anything resemble him."

Modern customs with regard to eating prevailed in his days.

"Since it is forbidden to eat the remains of a meal, every single man must have his food for himself; for if any one of the party who are eating should take the food from one and the same plate, that which remains in the plate becomes, after the first eater has taken part, to him who wants to take as the second, the remains of the meal, and such is forbidden."

After describing the castes, the author points out that—

"According to Hindu Philosophers, liberation is common to all castes and to the whole human race, if their intention of obtaining it is perfect."

"Thus by the Xth century, the Vedantic restriction of Sanyasa and Moksha to Brahmanas had generally given way before the Agama extension of it to all men. Al Beruni is so unprejudiced as to point out after an elaborate account of idols,

"that such idols are erected only for uneducated people of little understanding; that the Hindus never made an idol of any supernatural being, much less of God."

There were in Al Beruni's days eleven different scripts used in India.

"The Hindus begin their books with Om, meaning thereby a confession of the unity of God."

Al Beruni notes that in his days the Hindus alone went

"beyond the thousand in their numeral system",

"at least in their arithmetical technical terms",

"and extend the names of the orders of numbers until the 18th order for religious reasons, the mathematicians being assisted by the grammarians with all kinds of etymologies."

A man who performs a pilgrimage

"sets off to wander to some holy region, to some much venerated idol, or to some of the holy rivers. He worships in them, worships the idol, makes presents to it, recites many hymns and prayers, fasts, and gives alms to the Brahmans, the priests, and others. He shaves the hair of his head and beard, and returns home."

"In every place to which some particular holiness is ascribed, the Hindus construct ponds intended for the ablutions. In this they have attained to a very high degree of art..."

"It is obligatory with them (the Hindus) every day to give alms as much as possible. They do not let money become a year or month old, for this would be a draft on an unknown future, of which a

man does not know whether he reaches it or not. With regard to that which he earns by the crops or from the cattle, he is bound to pay to the ruler of the country the tax which attaches to the soil or the pasture-ground (grougd rent?). Further, he pays him one-sixth of the income in recognition of the protection which he affords to the subjects."

"The Hindus marry at a very young age; therefore the parents arrange the marriage for their sons."

Among other festivals of the people. the following are described by Al Beruni:—

"The *Hindoli chaitra*, when the image of Vasudeva is swung in a cradle, *Yajnas* for five days before the full moon in *Vaisakha*, the *Vasanta* on the day of the vernal equinox, that on the first of *Jyaistha*, when first-fruits of all seeds are thrown on water, the full-moon day of *Sravana* when Brahmans are fed, the *Mahanavami*, on the 8th *Asvayuja* when the moon is in the station *Mula*, the *Pitrpaksa* in *Bhadrapada*, the first *Karthika* called the *Dibali*, when they light a great number of lamps, and on the 16th *Phalguna*, the *Sivaratri*, and the *Sankrantis*, i.e., the days of the equinoxes and the solstices. These extracts from the *Indika* prove that the claim of Hindus that their *Dharma* i.e., religious, social and political institutions have been *Sanatana*, especially unaltered from very early times, is true, that the ordinances of the Sastras were not merely theoretical rules, but were actually practized, and that the cause of early marriages was not the



advent of Muhammadans, as is so often asserted, but they prevailed before the Muslim conquest of the land. Though most of the Kshattriya princes of North India were Saivas, Al Beruni's account of Indian religion gives us the Impression that Visnu-worship was universal in India: from this we can infer that a wave of the Vaisnava religion spread over India at the time."

On very insufficient grounds the West has been calling Hindu culture as other-worldly. The whole of Sanskrit literature written is not available even now. If it is accepted that temples were burnt, it follows that libraries also were burnt, for few temples there were that did not have a library. With the little that remains, it is no wonder that the Western minds fed with the ideas in Buddhistic and Jain literature, picture India as a recluse seeking lonely salvation in some neglected cave. The unearthing of the Artha Sastra of Kautilya gave a surprise to the Western minds. In the wake of the Artha Sastra many other important works also came to light, and now there is on the table of the Orientalist a vast sanskrit literature which is anything but spiritual or religious, and several scholars like Prof. Formichi and W. E. Clark have changed their old notions. To the Hindu, enjoyment and life are not recent British imports. Enjoyment and acquisition are always regulated by Dharma. Both the Artha Sastra and Kama Sastra insist on Artha and Kama (acquisition and enjoyment) being enjoyed without the violation of Dharma. Kautilya insists on Indriya Jaya for the Prince and forbids Para Himsa, Para Dravya and Para Sthree. Hinduism therefore denies not the joys of this

life, but only wants to draw up a limit and a method for the enjoyment. The Lord says in the Gita

धर्माविरुद्धो भूतेषु कामोऽस्ति भरतर्षभ ।

He blesses all desire that is consistent with Dharma. Neither for the individual nor for the State do our Vedic ideals lay Kama or Artha as the main impulse. To encroach on another is to violate Dharma. The Isavasya says

मा गृधः कस्यस्त्रिद्धनम् ।

“Covet not another’s”. Thus personal or national Imperialism is also condemned. Sri Rama also condemns the State and the king that have converted their Dharma into a crime, who in their reckless pursuits of more and more have become low, wicked and sinful. He says “Such kingship & rule, I shall cast away.”

क्षात्रं धर्ममहं त्यक्ष्ये ह्यधर्मं धर्मं संहितम् ।

क्षुद्रैर्नृशंसैः पापैश्च सेवितं पापकर्मभिः ॥

Dr. Keith writes in his “History of Sanskrit Literature”—“The Vedic literature permeated with religion, affords a false impression of the Vedic Indian as a person given to reflection without regard to practical life. Nothing can be farther from the truth. The East, in lieu of bowing low before the West in disdain or otherwise, confronted Alexander the Great with an obstacle which he did not attempt to penetrate, and his garrisons had, soon after his death, to be withdrawn. If we are to judge India aright, we must add two other objects to the Dharma, viz. Artha and Kama.”

On the acoustical knowledge of the Hindus, no special comment is necessary. Sir C. V. Raman writes that India might have served as the source from which knowledge of the acoustical instruments spread both eastward and westwards. He has proved what a remarkable creation the Mridanga is, that its acoustic properties are not the result of chance, but leave "very little doubt in one's mind as to the developed acoustic knowledge of the ancient Hindus."

To the Hindu idealist, life was an art. Education was of the whole man, with no over-development of only a part of one's personality. Dharma, Artha, Kama and Moksha were all harmonised in the noble Hindu life. Prof. W. E. Clark says in one of his addresses that the Hindu life under Vedic ideals struck a balance between the claims of Kama, Artha and Moksha, and that India has been more successful than the West in striking the balance between *Pravrithi* and *Nivriti*.

## Chapter V

### A MESSAGE ON THE MAHODAYA DAY

(9TH FEBRUARY 1948)

India has before her a *mighty beginning* and a heavy responsibility from the 15th August 1947, to reach her goal and leave her people in peace, contentment and happiness according to our ideals. The word Mahodaya (Mahat Udaya) is full of such meaning and is also suggestive of the Rising sun. The task before the country is beset with difficulties and obstacles most of which are, if examined closely, existent in our own selves. With the message I received from His Holiness of Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam, I got this 'fortunate chance' of making known His Holiness's wishes that the Vedic ideals should be followed in the restoration or creation and maintenance of "Theertha" and "Varna", and special care should be taken that Sastra and Shāstra (शस्त्र & शास्त्र) (Military strength and strength of learning) develop hand in hand.

शस्त्रेण रक्षिते देशे शास्त्राभ्यासः प्रवर्तते ।

According to Vedic ideals adequate development of military strength is even a necessary preliminary for defence against internal and external inimical forces. King Bhoja writes in his Yukti Kalpatharu

दण्डसाध्यं यतो राज्यं स दण्डः शास्त्रसंश्रितः ।

Kings Udayaditya and Naravarma, successors of Bhoja have also left the inscriptions in the Sarpa bhandha

(page 14) that their swords (Military strength) are intended for the protection of Varnas.

This combination of Sastra and Shastra as per Vedic ideais and the results thereof are referred to even in a very much older work (Kautilya's Artha Sastra-dated 4th century B. C) in the last stanzas. The author Chanakya, the giant politician and diplomat, achieved his object by such combination.

एवं शास्त्रमिदं युक्तं एताभिस्तन्त्रयुक्तिभिः ।  
 अवाप्तौ पालने चोक्तं लोकस्यास्य परस्य च ॥  
 धर्ममर्थं च कामं च प्रवर्तयति पाति च ।  
 अधर्मानर्थविद्वेषानिदं शास्त्रं निहन्ति च ॥  
 येन शास्त्रं च शस्त्रं च नन्दराजगता च भूः ।  
 अमर्षेणोद्धृतान्याशु तेन शास्त्रमिदं कृतम् ॥

### MAHODAYA

According to the most ancient Hindu customs still prevalent over the full length and breadth of India, Ardhodaya and Mahodaya are very important ceremonial occasions, occurring rarely at the complete or almost complete coincidence respectively of four different features.

Ardhodaya occurs in the month of Pousha or Magha on the new moon day, falling on a Sunday, with Vyathipatha Punyakalam and Sravana, the exact time of the combination being in the forenoon.

अमा अर्क पात श्रवणैः युक्ताचेत् पौषमाघयोः ।  
 अर्धोदयस्सविज्ञेयः कोटिसूर्यग्रहैस्समः ॥

Mahodaya occurs if all the conditions specified for Ardhodaya are fulfilled but not quite completely (किञ्चिन्मूढं महोदयं). On 9th February 1948, all the conditions are met except that it falls on a Monday. The month of Magha begins on that day. Millions of Hindus of all castes and communities—in fact the majority of the population of India—go to some sacred Theertha (Holy waters) river or ocean, for a bath on this New Moon day. This day and the month of Magha are believed to be the most suited and propitious for Vidya-rambha or Vidyagrahana [Commencement of (special) study (of art) ]. Thus “Varna” (letters or learning) closely follows “Theertha,” and the care of these two is the duty of the king or State. The learning may be of Sastra or Shastra; (military or secular, or spiritual education). My humble prayers on this Holy day are that early and active steps should be taken to restore, revive and propagate all such works and facilities for the prosperity of the subjects and the happiness and safety of the country.

The “Theerthas” will Give us More Food, if they are “spread” over Mother earth who will feel pleased when She is cooled, and give us plenty in return. The Bhoja’s lake may be restored, the Ramapada Sagar in Godavari may be completed, the Damodar Project in Bengal may be expedited and all such “Theerthas” should be maintained efficiently without being allowed to get vandalised like the Bhojpur lake. If these “Theerthas” are made available, how could famine dare to enter this land?

दुर्भिक्षान्मम सेवकस्य भगवन् विश्वेश भीतिः कुतः ?

The Letters (वर्ण)—[to follow a bath (in a तीर्थ)—as after the Mahodaya day]—must get special encouragement in every direction, with special State aid as in the days of king Bhoja. There are and will be several Ramanujams and Ramans in this country, but the intelligent preceptors, school-masters and professors should spot such prodigies, and the Government must take them over under their special care (as we have no Henry Fords to encourage such pupils) and provide all facilities for the advancement of (वर्ण) learning in general or research, be it atomic investigation, utilising Solar energy, navy construction or Vedantic studies.

Modern western science by itself, developed with different ideals, with its cruisers, torpedoes, bombers and atom bombs, is too one sided in its development and as it is now, it is seething with instruments of destruction ; it can *never* hold permanent sway as the basis is not sound. The sole purpose of the (शस्त्र) weapon or military strength must be to help in the development of culture (शास्त्राभ्यास), without prejudice to the finer human instincts ; when the general cultural development and happiness of a whole nation are in danger, because of internal or external foes, reparation by force is very necessary (दण्डसाध्य), because if the whole community goes, all the culture goes with it and therefore violence (or Himsa) is necessary to protect the culture, or in other words, the object of (शस्त्र) Military strength is to protect culture and thereby keep the people happy. Military strength for a country is therefore a necessity. King Bhoja's name has become immortal because of the cultural development in his reign, made possible by

adequate military strength, and scholars refer to him and write about him even after nine centuries. The two developments (military and cultural) must therefore progress inter-twined, hand in hand, and the responsibility of the State lies in this direction. Hence it is said—

शस्त्रेण रक्षिते देशे शास्त्राभ्यासः प्रवर्तते ।

The contents of this Souvenir are mostly extracted from various old literature and recent research publications and my thanks are due to Dr. V. Raguvaran M.A., Ph. D., Department of Sanskrit, University of Madras, who suggested to me and procured for my reference, all the books required. My thanks are also due to the B. N. K. Press, Madras, who co-operated with me in rushing through this work at my special request. Above all, the publication within the short time I had, would not have been possible, had it not been for the Blessings and valuable ideas and suggestions given to me (which I have tried to incorporate in this pamphlet) by my Garu, His Holiness The Jagatguru Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Swamikal of the Kanchi Kamakoti Pectam,

अखण्डानन्दसंबोधः वन्दनाद्यस्य जायते ।

यतीन्द्रं तमहं वन्दे चिदानन्दतनुं गुरुम् ॥

His humble disciple.

Madras, }  
9th Feb. 1948 }

M. K. RANGANATHAN  
Chief Engineer, P. W. D.  
(Retired)





HIS HOLINESS THE JAGADGURU  
SRI CHANDRASEKHARENDRASARASWATHI  
*of the Kanchi Kamakoti Peetam*